

**DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY  
FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING CENTER  
GLYNCO, GEORGIA 31524**

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FLETC DIRECTIVE (FD)

NUMBER: 91-01.A

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Subject:

DATE: 09/30/85

Sunset Review:

FIREARMS POLICY AND GUIDELINES TO BE  
TAUGHT IN ALL BASIC AND CENTER- CONDUCTED ADVANCED TRAINING  
PROGRAMS

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1. PURPOSE. This directive publishes guidelines for the implementation of the firearms policy to be taught at the Center.
2. SCOPE. The provisions of this directive are applicable to all basic and Center advanced training programs, including the Center-conducted training portion of the integrated programs.
3. REFERENCE. Board Policy Document 73/2 dated December 12, 1973, subject: Firearms Policy to be Taught at the Center (see attached).
4. POLICY. A FIREARM MAY BE DISCHARGED ONLY AS A LAST RESORT WHEN THE AGENT OR POLICE OFFICER REASONABLY BELIEVES THERE IS IMMINENT DANGER OF LOSS OF LIFE OR SERIOUS BODILY INJURY TO HIMSELF/HERSELF OR TO ANOTHER PERSON.

The policy makes no allowances for liberal interpretations; and to ensure that students perform in conformance with Center training standards, the following Guidelines are provided.

5. GUIDELINES. Initial orientations to the Center firearms policy will explain the use of force limitations and restrictions. The following guidelines offer general interpretations of the firearms policy for training and exercise purposes.

- a. Display of Arms

As a general rule, when in the presence of the public a handgun should be drawn only when the agent or police officer or his/her superior has sufficient cause to expect it will be used and the agent or officer is preparing for its use. Shoulder weapons (long arms) may be displayed as their use may require.

During training and exercises, handguns will remain holstered until the situation develops to a point where their use as a cover or for imminent employment is justified. When the weapon is drawn or displayed during; arrest situations, the student will be instructed that, absent special circumstances, the command is: "POLICE! DON'T MOVE", or "FEDERAL OFFICER! DON'T MOVE!", as appropriate

b. Firing

Firing a weapon should be with the intent of rendering the person at whom the weapon is discharged incapable of continuing the activity prompting the agent or police officer to shoot.

Indiscriminate and random firing is prohibited. During training exercises, the firing or excessive shots beyond that necessary to accomplish the mission will be discouraged. Only the use or reasonable force will be emphasized.

c. Firing Shots. Warning shots pose a hazard to innocent parties and are, therefore, prohibited.

d. Moving Vehicle.

Firing at a moving vehicle with the intent of rendering it incapable of being operated poses a formidable danger to innocent parties. The possibility of a ricochet is greatly increased when the target is a car body or a spinning tire. Utmost caution must be exercised when considering such action.

There are no guarantees that a vehicle can be rendered incapable of further operation by firing shots at the radiator, motor, or tires. Firing at the vehicle operator for the same purpose poses the hazard of an uncontrolled moving vehicle if the operator is hit. Only the danger of loss of life or serious bodily injury should prompt firing at someone in a moving vehicle.

e. Fleeing Person

Firing at a fleeing person will not be considered justified unless the agent or police officer reasonably believes that the person he/she is considering shooting poses an imminent threat to human life.

During training exercises, students will be instructed to base their judgment and action on the situation as it develops and not on what they presume will happen.

f. Authority

The Authority to bear firearms carries with it an obligation and responsibility to exercise discipline, restraint, and good judgment in their use. The agent or police officer must keep in mind that when firing a weapon, there always exists a danger to innocent parties.

Training exercises will emphasize that a firearm will not be discharged if there is a danger that such action could harm innocent bystanders through direct hits or ricochets. In this respect, students will be instructed not to fire if they are in doubt as to whether such action may harm innocent bystanders.

6. REPORTS. When a firearm is discharged during basic training exercises, FTC-OFM-30 (Incident Report) will be initiated and filed with the exercise coordinator. Live range firing and the Judgment Pistol Shooting course are exempt from this report.

7. RESPONSIBILITY. The Chief, Enforcement Operations Division, is assigned the responsibility for ensuring that the courses and programs of firearms training are conducted in accordance with the policy and guidelines of this directive. Coordinators of practical exercises in which safe functional firearms are used will ensure that students adhere to the directive policy and guidelines.

8. OFFICE OF PRIMARY INTEREST. Office of General Training.

Charles F. Rinkevich  
Director

Attachment

## Board Policy Document 73/2

December 12, 1973

## FIREARMS POLICY TO BE TAUGHT AT THE CENTER

Introduction. The Center is to teach a firearms policy in the Center's Criminal Investigator School (CIS) and Police School (PS) which is identical with that of the Participating Agencies in the Center whose firearms policies are the most limited or constrained. Students are to be informed that any variation in the policy provisions governing the usage of firearms; i.e., broadening the constraint, can be carried out only in conformance with any variations which may be taught to the police officers or agents by their respective parent agencies during training received subsequent to attendance at the Center's CIS or PS.

Center instructors are not authorized to interpret Participating Agency policies or presumed Agency variations from the Firearms Policy taught at the Center.

Policy. A firearm may be discharged only as a last resort when in the considered opinion of the agent or police officer there is danger of loss of life or serious bodily injury to himself or to another person.

Guidelines. Firing a weapon should be with the intent of rendering the person at whom the weapon is discharged incapable of continuing the activity prompting the agent or police officer to shoot.

Warning shots pose a hazard to innocent parties and are therefore prohibited.

Firing at a moving vehicle with the intent of rendering it incapable of being operated poses a formidable danger to innocent parties. The possibility of a ricochet is greatly increased when the target is a car body or a spinning tire. Utmost caution must be exercised when considering such action.

As a general rule, when in the presence of the public, a handgun should be drawn only when the agent or police officer or his superiors have sufficient cause to expect it will be used and the agent or police officer is preparing for its use. Shoulder weapons (long arms) may be displayed as their use may require.

The Authority to bear firearms carries with it an obligation and responsibility to exercise discipline, restraint and good judgment in their use. The agent or police officer must keep in mind that when firing a weapon, there always exists a danger to innocent parties.